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Living Pests,
Pathogens,
and Vectors

PA-873
Agricultural Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Regulating the Shipment of Living Pests, Pathogens, and Vectors

NEED FOR GUIDELINES

The number of living pests, pathogens, and vectors used in scientific research steadily increases each year. Federal and State agencies are concerned about the importation, interstate shipment, and final disposition of such organisms.

Scientists, at times, have unknowingly violated Federal, State, or local laws regarding the handling and movement of pests, pathogens, and vectors; thereby increasing hazards to America's agriculture.

Three Federal statutes—the Animal Quarantine Act of 1903, Plant Quarantine Act of 1912, and the Federal Plant Pest Act of 1957—prohibit the importation and movement of pests, pathogens, vectors, and articles that might harbor these organisms unless authorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These acts and related State laws, cooperatively enforced, are intended to protect American agriculture by preventing the unauthorized movement and establishment of dangerous organisms.

APPLYING FOR PERMITS

Persons wishing to import or move pests, pathogens, or vectors should request authorization from the appropriate Federal agency well in advance of shipment. Upon request, the agency will forward an appli-

cation specifying the information needed in considering the request. Applications should be completed by the intended receiver because it is his responsibility to comply with the regulations, including any special safeguards that may be specified.

GRANTING PERMITS

Each request for a permit is decided upon its individual merits. Decisions on granting or withholding permits are reached after consultation with specialists—Federal, State, private—on the particular pest, pathogen, or vector involved. When appropriate, the permitting agency will consult with other Federal agencies and with receiving States that might be interested in or regulate such movements.

Movement of pests, pathogens, and vectors is authorized only in accordance with conditions that will prevent their introduction into or dissemination within the United States.

Generally, shipments of pests, pathogens, and vectors from infested to noninfested areas will not be allowed. Movement of a species into an area already infested by that species usually will not be allowed if different races are involved. However, under extenuating circumstances, with adequate safeguards, such shipments may be authorized and the necessary permits issued. Permits include conditions on the way pests, pathogens, or vectors shall be shipped, handled, treated, stored, used, and inactivated or destroyed.

Some of the questions that the applicant and the agency must consider are: Is the organism common in the United States or in the area of final destination? Does the mode of shipment afford adequate safeguards? Will only qualified personnel be working with the organism? If specimens escape, can they survive and, if so, can the pest be eradicated? Is the pest, pathogen, or vector known to be injurious to crops or livestock and, if so, how important to the economy are those products?

PERMITS REQUIRED

Plant Pests, Pathogens, and Vectors

Plant pests, pathogens, and vectors cannot be imported into or through the United States unless accompanied by a permit from USDA's Plant Quarantine Division.

Plant pests subject to Federal domestic quarantines or Federal-State cooperative programs, and parasites associated with these pests, cannot be moved intrastate and interstate without a permit. These permits should be requested from USDA's Plant Pest Control Division. Permits for the movement of all other plant pests, pathogens, or vectors are required and should be requested from the Plant Quarantine Division.

Animal Pests, Pathogens, and Vectors

Pests, pathogens, and vectors of livestock and poultry diseases cannot be imported into the United States except under a permit issued by USDA's Animal Health Division.

Permits should be requested from the Animal Health Division for the intrastate and interstate movement of animal pests and vectors which are enzootic pathogens of high virulence or for any organism for which a national animal diseases eradication or control program exists. Newly isolated agents may be placed in this category until their significance and distribution are known. Diagnostic specimens from livestock or poultry should have the concurrence of the receiving State livestock sanitary officials before being moved.

When animal pathogens and vectors are indigenous to all States, a specific permit is usually not required. This is also true of diagnostic specimens from livestock or poultry having diseases readily found throughout the country and of everyday disease significance.

PARASITES AND PREDATORS

Parasites and predators of plant and animal pests may prove destructive to agriculture when introduced into new environments. Scientists, therefore, should consult with appropriate authorities before transporting or introducing parasites and predators into new areas.

SHIPPING LABELS

Distinctive shipping labels are furnished when movement is authorized. It is important that these labels be used since they are the means of informing port quarantine and regulatory inspectors that the shipment has been authorized.

FOR APPLICATION FORMS AND PERMITS

Type of Organism

Contact

Plant pests coming under Federal domestic quarantines or cooperative Federal State programs.

Director, Plant Pest Control Div.
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Federal Center Building
Hyattsville, Md. 20782

All plant pests being imported and those plant pests being moved interstate that are not under Federal domestic quarantines.

Director, Plant Quarantine Div.
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Federal Center Building
Hyattsville, Md. 20782

Importation or movement of animal pathogens or their vectors.

Director, Animal Health Div.
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Federal Center Building
Hyattsville, Md. 20782

Note: The Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, has regulations governing the shipment of pathogens and vectors of diseases of man. Requests for information relating to these regulations should be addressed as follows:

Type of Organism

Contact

Importation, and distribution after importation, of pathogens, vectors, or potential vectors.

Chief, Foreign Quarantine Program
National Communicable Disease Center
United States Public Health Service
Atlanta, Ga. 30333
or
Public Health Service
Quarantine Stations at
United States ports of entry

Interstate shipment of pathogens.

(Pending)

Plant Pest Control Division,
Plant Quarantine Division,
Animal Health Division
Agricultural Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Hyattsville, Md. 20782

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